

California Rehabilitation Oversight Board Minutes
July 13, 2011 Meeting

The California Rehabilitation Oversight Board (C-ROB) met in open session at 9:30 a.m. on July 13, 2011, at the California State University, Sacramento, Modoc Hall, Willow Suites 1-3, 3020 State University Drive South, Sacramento, California.

Board Members: Present at the meeting were Bruce Monfross, Inspector General (A)(Chairman); Debra Jones, Administrator, Adult Education Programs, California Department of Education, (Designee for Tom Torlakson, Superintendent of Public Instruction); Van Ton-Quinlivan, Vice Chancellor, California Community Colleges (Designee for Jack Scott, Chancellor, California Community Colleges); Susan Turner, Professor, University of California, Irvine (President of the University of California appointee); William Arroyo, M.D., Regional Medical Director, Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health; Michael Cunningham, Director (A), Department of Alcohol and Drug Programs; and Wendy Still, Chief Adult Probation Officer for the City and County of San Francisco (Senate Committee on Rules appointee). Not represented at this meeting were the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR), California State University, Sacramento, and Solano County Sheriff.

Office of the Inspector General staff: Barbara Sheldon, Chief Counsel; Renee Hansen, C-ROB Executive Director; Celeste Olson, C-ROB Secretary and Ann Bordenkircher, Sr. Legal Analyst.

Panel Presenters:

CDCR: Glenn Brooking, Superintendent, Office of Correctional Education

Donna Seifert, Associate Superintendent, Office of Correctional Education

Elizabeth Siggins, Director (A), Division of Rehabilitative Programs

Terri McDonald, Director, Adult Institutions

Darby Kernan, Assistant Secretary, Legislation

Public Comment: Patrick Wilson, Hellan Roth Dowden, Dr. Susan Lawrence, and Emily Harris.

Item 1. Call to Order.

Chairman Monfross called the meeting to order at 9:39 a.m.

Item 2. Introductions and Establish Quorum.

Chairman Monfross introduced himself as the Acting Inspector General and Chairman of the California Rehabilitation Oversight Board. The Chairman then introduced OIG staff and asked the Board members to introduce themselves.

Item 3. Review Agenda.

Chairman Monfross reviewed the agenda stating that the purpose of the meeting was to hear from the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation on the progress it has made on rehabilitative programming and also for the Board to discuss the anticipated impact that Assembly Bill 109, Public Safety Realignment, will have at the local level.

Item 4. Review and Approval of the March 11, 2011 minutes.

Upon motion made and duly seconded, the minutes of the March 11, 2011 C-ROB meeting were approved.

Item 5. Executive Director updates.

Executive Director Hansen indicated that there were no updates.

Item 6. California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation Updates.

Glenn Brooking, Superintendent, Office of Correctional Education, CDCR, gave an overview of some projects they are currently working on in spite of the budgetary constraints - projects that are cost-effective and fit within the current reduced budget. The department has developed several leadership councils to help with the projects and assessing inmate program needs. He stated that the department is working toward a structure similar to public schools with a district-type office that will handle the hiring of credentialed staff as well as provide consistency and direction to the educational staff.

Superintendent Brooking also touched on: changing from the audits and compliance program to a school improvement process, changing from six education “models” to three “structures,” selection and purchase of new curriculum material in the upcoming budget year, incorporating college courses into the volunteer education program, the use of CON Academy educational DVD’s or other software, improvement to the inmate class reassignment process, and responded to various questions from the board.

Elizabeth Siggins, Director (A), Division of Rehabilitative Programs, CDCR, discussed the \$101 million reduction to the 2011/2012 fiscal year budget and the belief that this is a one time cut. In addition, she noted that the additional \$49 million reduction to community-based aftercare was restored by the Legislature and the Administration. Ms. Siggins also responded to various questions from the board.

Public Comments, Item 6:

Patrick Wilson stated that he believes the Honor Program stops the “predator/prey” situation and should be reviewed by the CDCR and that it should be installed as a prison program everywhere. He is also concerned that the atmosphere in the prisons is not conducive to education and that it would be a waste of money to fund a program that has already failed and would fail again.

Hellan Roth Dowden, SEIU Local 1000, thanked the board for all the work they have done so far. She stated that she believes progress is being made because there have been more collaborative interactions with the teachers, but would like a discussion regarding the issue of inmate class assignment placed on the agenda. Another item of concern is the Division of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) inmates turning 18. When they are being transferred to adult prisons, some restructuring may be needed to ensure that their education programs are following them.

Susan Lawrence, Founder & CEO, Catalyst Foundation, stated that the CDCR can adjust the educational programs in any way, or introduce evidence-based models but if the prisons are hotbeds of violence and disorder with frequent lockdowns, the students will not be in the classrooms. She also said that the Honor Program offers an alternative to this disorder and she urges the support of the current Honor Program at California State Prison, Los Angeles County and the expansion of the concept throughout the system.

Item 7. California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation Presentations.

Darby Kernan, Assistant Secretary, Legislation, CDCR, gave a PowerPoint presentation regarding Assembly Bill (AB) 109, the 2011 Public Safety Realignment Legislation and responded to questions from the board.

Terri McDonald, Director, Adult Institutions, CDCR, touched on the Supreme Court decision on prison overcrowding and AB 109. She stated that once the department has solid AB 109 projections they will return to conduct another presentation showing how the department will or will not “fit within the marks” for population reduction set by the Three Judge Panel.

Public Comments, Item 7:

Patrick Wilson, stated that he believes the board and CDCR are spinning their wheels and that in years to come we will still be meeting and trying something new.

Emily Harris, Californians United for a Responsible Budget, said that she is part of a coalition of organizations across the state working to reduce the number of people in prison and the number of prisons in the state. She said that one of the coalition’s concerns with AB 109 that wasn’t addressed during today’s meeting was the perceived need to build more jail cells to accommodate the overcrowding that is being shifted from the state prisons to the county jails. And in turn, the effect this will have on county budgets as well as the cuts to other county programs to accommodate the increase to the county jails.

Item 8. Board Discussion on the Impact of Assembly Bill 109 at the Local Level.

Board members touched on the need for focus and holding the counties accountable to deliver more than just incarceration; training sessions by key executives to educate the counties regarding best practices for creating sentencing structures; possibly enlisting help from the universities to assist counties with structuring their plan; documenting the impact on individual recidivism rates and public safety in general; and what priority rehabilitation within CDCR will be given and who will benefit.

Item 9. Future board meeting schedule.

Renee Hansen, Executive Director, said the next C-ROB report will be published on September 15, 2011. There will be an all day meeting on September 7th to review and approve the report as well as receive an update from CDCR on the implementation status of AB 109, Public Safety Realignment, and a half day meeting on November 2nd.

Item 10. Future agenda items.

Ms. Hansen stated potential items brought up during the meeting and asked board members for additional topics. Some topics mentioned:

- CDCR budget and programming updates
- Realignment and its impact on the structure and vision of rehabilitative programs in the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation
- Inmate education assignment process
- Education transition for DJJ wards transferring to adult population

Item 11. Public comment.

Arnold Kunst stated that recidivism reduction is a genuine passion of his and suggested that the board keep CDCR's feet to the fire.

Patrick Wilson stated that he believes the board is trying hard but that what we are calling education is really vocational training. He asked why a former prisoner is not on the board that can ask penetrating questions of CDCR.

Susan Lawrence, Founder & CEO, Catalyst Foundation, stated that Secretary Cate promised a bus to remove 60 prisoners from the Honor Yard at California State Prison, Los Angeles County who do not qualify to be in the Honor Program. She is sorry that he isn't here so that she can tell him personally that the bus never materialized. Now with the realignment, at California State Prison, Los Angeles County one of the reception yards is being converted to a General Population Level IV yard prompting a lot of transfers and movement. Realignment is a cost-effective opportunity to transfer prisoners out of the Honor Yard who do not belong there and transfer in prisoners who do want to participate in the Honor Program.

Item 12. Adjournment.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 12:59 p.m.

C-ROB Secretary

Dated

(These Minutes are posted on the web at www.oig.ca.gov.)